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ABSTRACT

Research examined in this review shows that when women and men perform the same acts or produce similar products, evaluations often differ, frequently in ways which are not consistent. In general, evaluation favors men over women when a competent performance is being assessed, while women are favored over men when an incompetent outcome is being evaluated. These findings are explained in terms of sex-role congruency. In addition, research on causal attributions of performance is reviewed. It is found that successful male performance tends to be seen as repeatable; attributions are made to stable and internal causes such as skill and ability. It is further shown that repeated successful female performance cannot be depended upon, since attributions are made to luck, an external factor, or to effort, an unstable factor. Also, lack of ability is used to explain female lack of success more than male lack of success. Finally, the process of evaluating women's performance is summarized in three major steps: initial perception of performance, comparison of such perceptions to norms, and prediction of future performance. (Author)

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The Evaluation of Women's Performance

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Running Head: Evaluation of Women

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Abstract

When women and men perform the same acts or produce similar products, evaluations often differ, in ways which often are not consistent. The research reviewed shows that, in general, evaluation favors men over women when a competent performance is being assessed, while women are favored over men when an incompetent outcome is being evaluated. These findings are explained in terms of sex-role congruency. In addition, research on causal attributions of performance is reviewed. Overall, successful male performance tends to be seen as repeatable; i.e., attributions are made to stable and internal causes, (skill and ability). Repeated successful female performance, however, cannot be depended upon, since attributions are made to luck, an external factor, or to effort, an unstable factor. Also, lack of ability is used to explain female lack of success more than male lack of success. Finally, the process of evaluating women's performance is summarized in three major steps: initial perception of performance, comparison of such perceptions to norms, and prediction of future performance.

The Evaluation of Women's Performance

"Our organization would be delighted to hire and promote more women," say many personnel specialists, "IF ONLY there were more qualified women around." No doubt there is some truth to such a statement. Discriminatory systems in the past have made it unlikely that women obtained or even wanted the necessary training and experience required by positions which are only now opening up to women. There are, however, other processes less defensible than women's lack of qualifications, that play heavy roles in decisions to hire and promote. Prominent among these is employee evaluation, a process that is intended to be objective and merit-based, but which repeatedly has been demonstrated to be vulnerable to stereotype and subjective bias.

Prejudicial evaluation has been cited as one explanation for the apparent failure of competent women to achieve as much success as men have. According to this argument, it is not so much the inability or unwillingness of women to perform well that prevents their upward mobility in a wide range of situations, as it is the general lack of recognition that their performance meets. Numerous studies have found support for this contention. In general, given equally qualified men and women, men are likely to be judged as more competent, qualified, and will more likely be chosen for

hiring, training and promotion than women. Yet this is not always so. The comparative evaluation of men and women is an issue with more complexity than might be expected at first.

The Two Sides of Evaluation Bias

The evaluation of competence. The landmark study showing evaluation prejudiced against women was conducted by Goldberg in 1968, a study which is important, not only for its findings, but also because it established a paradigm which has been used in many subsequent studies. Goldberg's study involves evaluating a "phantom other", a person who only exists on paper. Subjects are given a description of a hypothetical male or female with varying amounts of relevant or irrelevant information about the person and his/her performance. The subjects are then asked to evaluate the stimulus person on one or more dimensions. Since the stimulus persons are identical except for their sex, systematic variation in their evaluation can be attributed to their sex.

In the Goldberg (1968) study, forty college women were asked to evaluate six professional articles in terms of writing style, professional competence, professional status and ability to sway the reader. On all criteria, the articles attributed to John T. McKay were considered more impressive than the identical articles attributed to Joan T. McKay. The results were particularly striking because John

was evaluated more favorably than Joan in all fields, including the "masculine" ones of law and city planning as well as the "feminine" ones of elementary school teaching and dietetics.

Since the Goldberg study, a variety of studies have demonstrated similar downgrading of women purely on the basis of sex. The area of personnel selection, for example, is replete with findings of bias in favor of men and discrimination against women. In one study, Rosen and Jerdee (1974) presented male undergraduates with a personnel selection task, and found that male applicants were accepted significantly more frequently for management positions than equally qualified females, particularly for "demanding" managerial positions. Another study (Rosen, Jerdee and Prestwich, 1975) found that male managers rated male candidates as more acceptable, more suitable, and having greater potential for long service to the organization, in comparison to identical female candidates. Along similar lines, Gutek and Stevens (1977) found that both male and female students rated a male applicant as possessing greater potential for longevity than a comparable female applicant, and were more likely to hire the male than the female applicant. Shaw (1972) also found that female engineer/scientists and management applicants were rated lower than their male counterparts. Cohen and Bunker (1975), using campus recruiters as subjects, found that males are more likely than equally qualified females to be selected for a personnel technician position.

In other studies of personnel selection, subjects asked to rank a number of candidates ranked women lower than equally qualified males; males, therefore, were more likely to be ranked first than females. For example, Dipboye, Fromkin and Wiback (1975) found that of top ranking candidates for a hypothetical managerial position in a furniture store, 72 percent were male. If there was no evaluation bias, only 50 percent of top ranking candidates should have been male since characteristics of the hypothetical male and female applicants were identical. Dipboye, Arvey and Terpstra (1977) essentially replicated these findings. A more subtle form of evaluation in the hiring process involves assignment of pay level. Females who are hired but are assigned a lower starting salary than their male counterparts are implicitly evaluated less favorably than the men. Terborg and Ilgen (1975) and Dipboye, Arvey and Terpstra (1977) found that female applicants were hired at lower starting salaries than male applicants for the same positions.

The male bias goes beyond management situations. Lao, Upchurch, Corwin and Grossnickle (1975), for example, found that male applicants for scholarship funds were judged as more intelligent and more likable than their female counterparts. Likewise Deaux and Taynor (1973) found that male applicants for a study-abroad program were favored over identical female applicants. The same pattern of results was found among the supposedly more enlightened population of college

and university chairpersons. Fidell (1975) sent letters to 228 chairmen containing descriptions of ten hypothetical psychologists of whom eight were varied only on sex. She asked the chairmen to indicate the desirability of each candidate, and the level at which each psychologist might be hired, if at all. The results indicate that women were evaluated less favorably than men on several dimensions. Women received the greatest number of job offers at the assistant professor level, while their male counterparts were offered jobs at the associate professor level. In addition, the male applicants were rated as more desirable to the responding colleges in six of the eight comparisons. While not directed at the issue of evaluation, Butler and Paisley's (1977) research supports Fidell's findings. Butler and Paisley found that among husband-wife psychologist pairs, women were less likely to hold supervisory or full professor positions in comparison to their husbands despite the facts that the wives and husbands graduated from equally prestigious universities and have been active professionally for as many years. The authors conclude that the differential in position was due to sex discrimination, which can be traced, at least in part, to bias in performance evaluation.

Studies of other evaluation situations have also shown male advantage. Pheterson, Kiesler and Goldberg (1971) showed that when paintings were simply attributed to male or female artists, the male

paintings were judged as superior to the female paintings. Deaux and Emswiller (1974) showed also that male performance on a perceptual discrimination task was rated as more skillful than the equivalent female performance, whether the task be male-related (i.e., discrimination of mechanical objects) or female-related (i.e., discrimination of household objects). Another study (Taynor and Deaux, 1975) found parallel results for ratings of responses to emergency situations. The study showed that when "Linda" and "Larry" responded in the same way to the situation described, "Larry" was judged as behaving in a more logical fashion that "Linda".

In addition to their work being devalued, competent women may be subject to another disadvantage--their male colleagues may not like interacting with them, and even prefer to eliminate them from their work groups. A recent survey (Haefner, 1977) showed that people in a sample of workers in two towns in Illinois preferred working with males rather than females. Furthermore, while there was little distinction between barely competent men and women, workers clearly preferred working with highly competent men over highly competent women.

Hagen and Kahn (1975) conducted a laboratory study that arrived at similar conclusions. In a role-playing game situation, they compared reactions to competent women (defined in terms of the number of correct answers on a task) under conditions of competition, cooperation, or observation without interaction. They discovered that everyone liked

competent others more than incompetents, a finding which has been reported repeatedly by a number of studies (e.g., Aronson, Willerman and Floyd, 1966; Helmrich, Aronson and LeFan, 1970). However, they also discovered that males only preferred competent females to incompetent ones when the females were at a distance (i.e., in the observation condition). They did not have the same preference when they had to interact with the females in any manner, whether cooperatively or competitively. In addition, the study also found that when deciding which members to exclude from a group, both men and women showed a greater tendency to eliminate a competent woman than a competent man.

The evaluation of incompetence. The situation changes, however, when both men and women are incompetent. Whereas men have the edge over women when they are equally competent, women are judged as superior to men when the merits of both are clearly low.[1] Deaux and Taynor (1973), for example, found differences in the way men and women who were more and less qualified were evaluated. While the men were judged superior to women when the merits of each were high, women were judged superior to men when the merits of each were low. Similarly, Feather and Simon (1975) found more favorable reactions to unsuccessful females than to unsuccessful males. In this study, subjects were presented with hypothetical male or female characters who were described as occupying the top or bottom rungs of their classes in medical,

teaching or nursing schools. Across all three occupations, the unsuccessful females were upgraded relative to the successful ones. In addition, while males were evaluated more positively when they succeeded than when they failed, females were evaluated more positively when they failed than when they succeeded.

Bias then appears to work in both directions. Competent males are rated more positively than equally competent females, while incompetent males are rated lower than equally incompetent females. These apparently contradictory results can be reconciled by the notion of sex role congruence--on the whole, behaviors that violate societal sex-role expectations are negatively regarded. Since success at most demanding situations or occupations is generally expected of males and not of females, unsuccessful females are not as heavily penalized as unsuccessful males from whom more is expected. On the other hand, females are not rewarded for success in the same way that males are--success is viewed more positively if this success is consistent with sex-role expectations than if it is inconsistent (Feather, 1975).

The effects of sex-role incongruence. The negative effects of sex-role incongruence on various types of evaluation have been noted repeatedly. For example, Lao, Upchurch, Corwin and Grossnickle (1975) show that assertiveness, a typically masculine trait, is negatively related to estimates of intelligence and likability in females, but

not in males. Along the same lines, Costrich, Feinstein, Kidder, Maracik and Pascali (1975) showed strong penalties for role reversals in three role playing studies. A submissive male in a group discussion was considered highly unpopular, and both passive males and aggressive females were considered as needing therapy more than their counterparts who fell in line with sex-role specifications. Shaffer and Wegley (1974) also demonstrated negative evaluations resulting from sex-role incongruence. They presented raters with competent stimulus females who differed along the dimensions of success orientation (a trait typically regarded as masculine) and sex-role interests (masculine or feminine). They found that a competent woman who was described as non-success-oriented, and who expressed feminine interests was judged as more desirable as a work partner than a competent woman who was described as success-oriented or had masculine interests.

Levinson (1975) in a very imaginative study, also showed the detrimental effects of sex-role incongruence. He had students respond to newspaper ads, most of which were of sex-typed jobs with low skill and low education requirements (e.g., pest control servicemen, delivery boys, salesmen, receptionist, office clerk, telephone operator). Applicants who applied for sex-incongruent jobs were much more likely to be turned away. Employers showed clear cut discrimination toward 28 percent of females inquiring about male jobs and 44 percent of males inquiring about female jobs. Only about one-third of the women

applying to male jobs and one-fourth of males applying to female jobs did not experience any discrimination.

On the other hand, conformity to sex-role expectations is viewed positively and rewarded. Schein (1976), for example, found that hypothetical women in feminine occupations (e.g., nurses or librarians) were perceived as better socially adapted than men in these same occupations. Individuals who stay within occupations with the appropriate sex-role assignment have easier access to such jobs than those who cross sex-role boundaries. One example of this was demonstrated by Cash, Gillen and Burns (1977) who found that males were preferred for masculine jobs and females for feminine jobs by a group of personnel consultants.

The effects of sex-role incongruence, however, are not always so clear-cut. There is some recent evidence that the negative impact of sex-role incongruence on evaluations may be going underground, and therefore may be increasingly difficult to detect. In a study by Spence, Helmrich and Stapp (1973), reactions to a female stimulus person were different when the subjects were asked direct questions in an objective questionnaire, and when they were asked open-ended projective questions modeled after the TAT. Responses to the objective questionnaire showed that, given equally competent females, the masculine one was preferred to the feminine one. This finding replicates an earlier one by Spence

and Helmrich (1972) which used a video-tape of a competent woman's performance. When subjects responded to projective questions, however, a different picture emerged. In responding to questions such as: "What is happening?", What led up to the situation?", "What is being thought?" and "What will happen?", the general preference shifted from the masculine competent to the feminine competent. Spence et al. (1973) interpret their findings in terms of pressures from current social norms which profess outward egalitarianism without real changes in fundamental preferences. Thus, while there may be superficial acknowledgement that women can express masculine interests without a loss in attractiveness (reflected in the responses to objective questions), there are still underlying preferences for females who conform to traditional sex-role expectations. In support of this argument, another study (Kristal, Sanders, Spence and Helmreich, 1975) showed that women with masculine interests were liked as long as they exhibited a pattern of femininity as measured on a personality test.

The increasing social desirability of expressing non-sexist attitudes may make it necessary to go beyond direct questioning to more indirect probing methods like the projective techniques, if some of the conflicts involved in the shifting status of the sexes are to be adequately explored. Steinmann and Fox's (1966) study of college educated women and men arrive at the same conclusions. These researchers

found that whereas males said they preferred a fairly career-oriented woman to a homemaking-oriented woman, on more personal questions concerning children and marriage, the men were not so liberal. The authors concluded that men respond in a socially desirable, non-sexist way, on general issues of equality of opportunity and human rights but these global attitudes were not consistent with their attitudes towards operational issues.

In addition to becoming elusive, the effects of sex-role incongruence on evaluation are, at times, the reverse of what one might expect. There are occasions when certain behaviors, precisely because they contradict expectations, may produce more favorable outcomes than behaviors which are more in character. Rosen and Jerdee (1975) found that women who made their grievances known in a threatening manner were more likely to get results than those who made them in a pleading manner. Their incongruent role behavior was viewed as an indicator of the seriousness of their problem, and thus elicited attention from the superiors. Likewise, Dipboye and Wiley (1977) found that the qualifications and experience of a moderately aggressive female applicant were evaluated more favorably than a comparable male applicant.

While not the usual case, sex-role incongruence may result in disproportionately favorable praise for women's performance that equal men's. Jacobson and Effertz (1974) found that followers tended to rate

the performance of male leaders as being worse than that of female leaders, even though the actual performance of both sexes was equal. They quote Samuel Johnson's remark on women preachers in the 18th century: "Sir, a woman preaching is like a dog walking on its hind legs. It is not done well, but you are surprised to find it done at all." Thus, the female's leadership performance, because it was so out of role, seems to have been given more value than the equivalent male performance. Abramson, Goldberg, Greenberg and Abramson (1977) found similar results which they labeled the "talking platypus phenomenon". They found that female attornies and para-legal workers were rated as having more vocational competence than identical males. Other authors have found higher ratings obtained by females than by males under similar conditions. Hamner, Kim, Baird and Bigoness (1974) and Bigoness (1976) found that males had lower ratings than females in a predominantly male-dominated job, that of a grocery stock person.

Taynor and Deaux (1973, 1975) use notions from equity theory to explain such results. The equity model suggests that persons perceived as operating under constraints over which they have no control are usually perceived as more deserving of reward than individuals who are not operating under such constraints (Leventhal and Michaels, 1971). If being a woman can be considered a constraint under some circumstances, than a women would be rated as more deserving of a reward than a man

for comparable performances. Their studies supported their predictions, and showed that a woman who performed well in an emergency situation previously described as masculine was judged as more deserving of reward than an equally performing male.

Predicting Future Performance: The Role of Causal Attribution

The process of evaluation includes not only the assessment of past behavior, but also the predictions of the future. Expectations that certain behaviors or performances will be consistently repeated are particularly crucial when decisions have to be made concerning the person being judged. These expectations are shaped, to a large part, by the perceived causes of the behavior. Attribution theorists suggest that performance can be attributed to four causes: Ability, Effort, Task Difficulty and Luck (Weiner, Freize, Reed, Rest and Rosenbaum, 1971), which can be characterized as either internal or external, and as either stable or unstable. Figure 1 summarizes this basic attributional model which has since been expanded (cf. Freize, 1976 or Weiner, 1974 for a review).

Insert Figure 1 about here

Behavior is predictable if its perceived causes are either stable or internal, and behavior is maximally predictable if its perceived causes are both stable and internal. Of the four proposed causes, only Ability combines stability with internal locus of control. On this score, women who have been perceived as performing well have another obstacle to hurdle. The Deaux and Emswiller (1974) study, in which subjects

evaluated the tape recorded performance of male and female stimulus persons who did well on a male related task or a female related task, showed that when women were perceived as performing as well as men on the male-related task, their performance tends to be attributed to luck, an external factor, while the same performance for males tends to be attributed to skill, an internal factor. Similar results were obtained by Cash, Gillen and Burns (1977). The Deaux and Emswiller study also found that good performance was seen as more indicative of the males' general intelligence than of the females. A later study found similar results for judgments of male and female responses to a hold-up, presumably a masculine situation (Taynor and Deaux, 1975). Although both sexes performed equally well, male subjects viewed the men as having more ability than the women. Female subjects did not make this distinction.

A study by Feather and Simon (1975) found a parallel pattern along the locus of control dimension. They studied attributions made for male and female success in an actual school, and found that subjects tended to see ability (an internal factor) as a more important cause of male success setting than female success, while female success, more than male success, was attributed to easy courses (an external factor).

In both the Deaux and Emswiller (1974) and Taynor and Deaux (1975) studies, an interesting highlight emerged--although differential attribution to skill and ability was found for good performance on male

related tasks, no such differences were found for performance on the feminine task. Thus, sex-typing of the task seems important in making attributions about ability vs. task difficulty. Feminine tasks seem to be viewed as inherently requiring less ability and effort than masculine jobs. Cash, Gillen and Burns, (1977) found support for this notion.

Other attribution studies have compared attributions for male and female performance along the stability dimension, i.e., effort (unstable) vs. ability (stable) in masculine tasks (e.g., mechanics). These studies found that good female performance was attributed to effort, which is temporary, rather than to ability, which is permanent (Feldman-Summers and Kiesler, 1974; Etaugh and Brown, 1975; Taynor and Deaux, 1975). Bar-Tal and Frieze (1977) found that among highly achievement-motivated women performing in sex-neutral task (i.e., solving anagrams), effort is perceived as a strong causal factor in success. Apparently, judges assume a fixed low level of ability for women, and consequently invoke another factor, motivation, as the explanation for success in a difficult task. Conversely, they assume a high level of ability for men and boys and therefore invoke lack of motivation as an explanation for failure.

Unlike simple evaluation which favors competent males and incompetent females, causal attributions of performance remain favorable to males whether the performers are effective or ineffective. For example,

Etaugh and Brown (1973) and Cash, Gillen and Burns (1977) found that unsuccessful female performance was more frequently attributed to lack of ability than was comparable lack of success in a male. Cash, Gillen and Burns (1977) also found that unsuccessful performance in a masculine job by a male was more likely to be attributed to bad luck than the same performance by a female. Other studies report similar findings. Taynor and Deaux (1973) found that when a situation provided evidence about the ineffectiveness of both males and females, the males were seen as having greater ability than the females, even though there were no differences in the evaulation of their performance. Likewise, Feather and Simon's (1975) field study in a school setting found that lack of ability was used to explain female failure more than male failure, while course difficulty was used to explain male failure more than female failure.

Like other findings on evaluation, these attributional conclusions can be explained in terms of congruence with expectations. Success or failure that is in line with expectations tends to be attributed to stable factors--i.e., ability and task difficulty--while performance that is not in line with expectations tends to be attributed to unstable factors--i.e., effort or luck (Weiner, et.al. 1971). Successful performance by females in masculine and demanding situations is often perceived as a freak phenomenon which, in all likelihood, will not be consistently repeated.

Summary and Concluding Remarks

From this review of the studies comparing the evaluation of men and women, it appears that at least three major hurdles exist for women being evaluated--the perception of complete and accurate signals about their behaviors or performance, the comparison of the perceived behaviors to relevant norms, and the prediction that "good" performance will be consistently repeated in the future.

Initial perception of performance. Accurate evaluation of women's abilities and performance is frequently blocked at the initial point at which their behaviors are first perceived by the evaluator. General stereotypes, societal prescriptions and expectations filter the messages that are actually received by the evaluator, admitting only certain types of input. These popular beliefs create perceptual sets which "...tend, other things being equal, to determine what objects are to be perceived, the speed and readiness of their perception, and within limits, the content and vividness of their percept." (Allport, 1955, p. 241). Since women are seen as typically incapable of good performance at certain tasks, information that is contrary to such pre-conceived notions simply are blocked from perception.

The influence of generalized stereotypes is facilitated by the real lack of information concerning how women actually perform on the job. In the absence of specific information, people can base their

judgements easily on their own subjective feelings. In addition. the evaluation of any particular woman's abilities can be hindered by the operation of "Actuarial prejudice" (Kiesler, 1975), a process whereby the perceived probability of success of any one person is reduced when the probability of success of the group to which the person belongs is lower than that of other groups. Since most successful person, thus far, have been males, a judge or evaluator makes a best guess that an unknown person is less likely to be a success if that person is female.

The use of such actuarial probabilities as the basis for judgement, implies that unless additional specific information is provided to change the probabilities for any individual woman, the judgements of success of performance will favor men. A number of studies have shown support for this argument. Pheterson et.al. (1971) showed that although paintings attributed to males were generally favored over those attributed to females, the evaluations were equalized when awards were attached to paintings of both sexes. Another study (Deaux and Emswiller, 1974) found no sex differences in performance ratings when objective criteria were identified, and performances were clearly portrayed as identical. Furthermore, a study by Clifford and Looft (1971) concerning applications for assistant professorships at an American Psychological Association convention found that average women were less likely to be granted an interview than average men, but that this

difference disappeared when the applicants were described as having extremely impressive credentials. Rosen and Jerdee (1974) and Terborg and Ilgen (1975) also report results supportive of the notion that increasing information decreases evaluation bias. Stereotypes emerge when there is little information on which to base a decision. Frank and Drucker (1977), use the same line of argument when, contrary to other studies in the area, they find no sex differences in in-basket evaluations; they suggest that their findings result from the abundance of managerial data which they presented to the evaluators for use in making their judgements.

Although it is clear that presenting additional information about an individual, particularly a woman, is helpful in obtaining more accurate evaluations, the amount and type of added information required to counter-balance general expectations in specific cases remains open to question. Kiesler (1975) points out that, to be effective, information must be relevant to the person's performance on the task in question. She suggests that increases in irrelevant information would only exaggerate the tendency to base evaluations on actuarial estimates because the judge would then feel that he/she better understands the person. The importance of information relevance is highlighted by a recent study (Dipboye, Arvey and Terpstra, 1977), which found that, inspite of extensive information provided about the stimulus persons, females were still evaluated less favorably than

males. The information provided, however, largely consisted of non-performance related items, e.g., extra-curriculur activities, career plans and hobbies.

Even a greater unknown than the amount of information needed for specific cases, however, is the amount of actual shift in the general success rates of men and women that would be required to alter the actuarial estimates that people make. It is clear that a change in society's general expectations, when such expectations are based at least in part on reality-based estimates, necessitates not only the elimination of subjective prejudice, but also real changes in women's achievement levels. Frequently, this in itself is difficult, since less is expected of women than of men by others (Cash, Gillen and Burns, 1977) and by themselves. (Crandall, 1969; Freize, McHugh, Fisher and Valle, 1975;), particularly if the task at hand has been labelled as masculine (Stein, Pohly and Mueller, 1971; Montemayor, 1972; Deaux and Emswiller, 1974). Like the students randomly labelled "disadvantaged" who were treated and eventually behaved as though they were truly handicapped (Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968), women from whom less is expected--by themselves and others--eventually act to fulfill those expectations.

Comparison to norms. Still, there are women who perform well, contrary to all expectations. In some cases, such good performance is even recognized. This performance, recognized as good, faces the second major evaluation hurdle--the comparison of the perceived in-

formation to some norms or standards. For women, the application of norms to perceived performances or behaviors is often problemmatic, since many norms regarding desirable work-related behaviors are often not compatible with norms regarding behaviors appropriate to the female sex role.

The most global of these potentially conflicting standards concerns competence, which is expected on a job, but is not expected of women in general (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson and Rosenkrantz, 1972). A women who behaves in a competent manner disconfirms sex role expectations, and usually suffers one of two possible fates--she is disliked or excluded from the group, or her performance is discounted and attributed to chance. A third alternative is, of course, possible--the disconfirmation resulting from an exhibition of female competence could actually change an evaluator's beliefs regarding women's competence. This alternative, while the most desirable and necessary for the fair evaluation of women, is probably also the most difficult to achieve.

In addition to the global conflict that exists between competence and the female sex-role, tension is also found between expectations for the worker and expectations for the women on more specific levels. Many times the same behaviors are viewed differently depending on whether the actor is a man or woman. Assertiveness, for example, is frequently a necessary attribute for success in many areas, but is

regarded negatively for women (Lao et.al. 1975). A competitive man is enjoyed by other men, but a competitive woman is ostracized (Hagen and Kahn, 1975). These conflicting norms are particularly salient for women who have entered traditionally male realms of endeavor. One can only hope that such conflicts are temporary ones and will be diminished as the presence of women in previously masculine domains becomes more commonplace.

The final hurdle and some suggestions. If a woman's performance passes through the first two hurdles--her performance has been noticed, and has been judged as good--she faces the final hurdle of the evaluator's assessment that her performance will be repeated. Even if a women has been seen as a good performer in the past, this may not be sufficient to grant her added responsibility or promotions in the future. The chances are good that the evaluators will attribute her performance to unstable and external factors--effort and luck--rather than innate ability, and will therefore conclude that her good performance cannot be counted on in the future. This lack of future predictability resulting from the assumed causes of good female performance may make any single previous positive evaluation virtually meaningless. Thus, for any well-evaluated woman to have the same chances for success and mobility as her male counterpart, the link between performance and ability must be emphasized time and time again.

The establishment of such links may require that women prove themselves repeatedly in ways that are not required of men, in order to eliminate the non-ability explanations of good performance. Repeating outstanding performance, while necessary, is again complicated by the fact that women, like their evaluators, attribute their successes to non-ability factors (Feather, 1969, Feather and Simon, 1975; Bar-Tal and Frieze, 1977), and therefore have low expectations of success for their future performances. Women need to be made aware of the impact their own and other's expectations have on their performance so that they can make the appropriate adjustment.

Other steps can be taken to ensure more accurate evaluations of female performers. Women who do good work would do well not to assume that their good work will be noted simply because it is there, but should make special efforts to make their work more visible to their evaluators. Towards this end, Epstein (1970) counsels women to become experts in some readily recognizable specialty. Such a move would highlight the ability requirements of a woman's performance, and would minimize ambiguities regarding the causes of her work.

In addition, other steps in the direction of maximizing information relevant to the woman's performance would be beneficial to minimizing the operation of inference and bias in the evaluation of women. Where possible, objectives and task responsibilities should be clearly defined, and tools such as behaviorally-based rating scales

should be used to maintain focus on behavior that is relevant to the job. Training workshops alerting employers to the operation of biases in evaluation have also been found to be effective in facilitating fairer judgements (Schmidt and Johnson, 1973).

Clearly, these are all partial measures, and no single one will solve the problem of obtaining accurate evaluation of women's work. It is crucial that both parties involved in the evaluation process, the women themselves and their evaluators, be aware of the possibility of bias and begin to take the individual and institutional steps necessary to maximizing fair and accurate evaluation.

Footnotes

Requests for reprints should be sent to Veronica F. Nieva at the Advanced Research Resources Organization, 8555 16th Street, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

1. Similar results have been obtained for racial comparisons. Kim, Baird and Bigoness (1974) found a tendency to favor high-performing whites over high performing blacks, and to favor low performing blacks over low performing whites.

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Figure 1

Attributional Model